



# Southeast News

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FEBRUARY-MARCH 1989

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

## FROM THE CONFERENCE MINISTER

### "We Are On The Way"

Yesterday was my sixth-month anniversary with you. In that time, I have traveled up the mountains and down the valleys, from the city to the country. And how varied is the terrain of the Southeast Conference, both geographically and spiritually.

No two churches are alike. Each carries out its life and mission in its own way.

What do we have in common?

We have the conviction that Jesus Christ is the center of our life, though we may understand that differently, and we may carry out our ministries in varied ways.

In these years as a Conference you've been through a lot. Surely there has been both agony and ecstasy in those years.

What is needed now? That question can be answered in many ways. Let me tell you what I told the Conference Board of Directors in February:

"Through my intensive schedule of visits, meetings, correspondence and personal calls, I sense that a downward spiral of decades can be turned.

"The simple theme is "Believe - Believe God leads; believe God calls us forth to be a people of witness and mission in the Southeast; believe that we are sufficient and resourceful; believe that our health grows as we share in the support of the wider mission, denominationally and ecumenically.

"Yes we are a mission Conference, but all Conferences are mission Conferences; our health is to live responsibly with careful planning, and to secure adequate

## THE 23RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEETING:

### COMING TOGETHER AS "ALL GOD'S PEOPLE"

The 23rd Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference will be held on June 9-11, 1989, at Emory University in Atlanta.

Under the theme of "All God's People," the meeting will highlight and recognize the local churches of the Conference as bodies brought into being by God to be a community of mission in its own place.

"The clear call goes out to every church," said Roger Knight, Southeast Conference minister. "Be here!"

"Come together with all God's people to praise God! Bring a whole delegation from your church," he said.

One of the highlights of the meeting will be a notebook of "All of Our Churches." The notebook will tell the story of each church in the Conference, and will be distributed to every church who attends.

Among speakers at the meeting will be:

-- Rev. Walter Brueggeman, a professor at Candler School of Theology and an ordained UCC minister, who will lead a Bible focus on churches "being called by God."

-- Dr. Scott Libbey, executive vice president, United Church Board for World Ministries, who will talk on our connections with the worldwide church.

-- Rev. Charlotte Still, Office for Church Life and Leadership, who will share in leadership.

Churches are reminded to return the materials on the "History and Identity of Your Church" so you can be included in the "All Church" notebook.

Registration materials will be mailed to churches and pastors at the end of March.

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CONFERENCE CALENDERMarch 27:

Meeting of Office Equipment Task Force of the Board of Directors.

April 1:

Meeting of Nominating Committee, 10 a.m., Southeast Conference Office.

April 7:

Finance Committee, 12 noon; and Executive Committee, 5 p.m. Both at Conference Office.

April 10-11:

Southeast Conference Planning Consultation with Board of Homeland Ministries on church growth and new church development.

April 12:

Pastors and Spouses Retreat, 10 a.m. planning meeting.

April 14:

Annual Meeting Worship Committee, 1 p.m.  
Personnel Committee, 6 p.m.

April 17:

Annual Meeting Planning Committee, 10 a.m.  
Office Location Committee, 6 p.m.

April 18:

Staff Meeting, Conference office.

April 21-23:

Mini-Camp for Alabama churches.  
Contact Roger Jones, 429 Sivell Road, LaGrange, GA 30240.

May 7:

Dedication of Waverly United Community Church, 2 p.m. Waverly, Tenn.

May 8-10:

Pastors and Spouses Retreat, Rock Ridge Camp, Franklin, GA., 11 a.m.

May 15:

Annual Meeting Planning Committee, 10 a.m.

May 16:

Staff Meeting, Conference office.

May 20:

Outreach Commission

From the Conference Minister  
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support without hoping we'll be bailed out by someone, magically. We are on the way."

Of most critical importance now, is learning to be a convental people -- in some sense, a family. There are ties that bind us together. We belong together, and it is grievous that churches have become lost and estranged.

Why do churches belong to a denomination? Perhaps because it is basically the way for us to do it together, to connect with others, and to help others find new life. It is reaching out, giving, sharing and helping. A key measure of a local church is how it carries out its share of doing and giving significantly to the whole mission of Christ.

Now we are journeying through Lent and into Holy Week, focusing especially on the Crucifixion and Resurrection. We'll sing, "Were You There," and realize that by our being there, Jesus will be here.

As is said, whoever doesn't realize their participation in the crucifying, probably won't be open to resurrection! Think with me of the compelling and expectant imagery of Jesus' resurrection: A sunburst! An empty tomb! No hint of despair, closedness and negativism! Jesus is not dead, but through whom we can believe and hope.

Such is the life before us.  
Faithfully,  
Roger Knight

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STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

The Strengthen The Church offering, a thank offering of the United Church of Christ, takes place in the spring.

The all-church offering was approved by the General Synod in 1987 as a means of calling together new congregations and raising up new leaders for the 21st century. How important this offering is is reflected in the words of Avery Post, UCC president: "Church growth and leadership development are essential to the future of the United Church of Christ." For more information on receiving the offering in your church, please contact the Conference office.



NEWS FROM THE CHURCHESLaGrange, United

United Congregational Christian Church has voted to relocate the church.

Chattanooga, First

First Congregational Church is offering its downtown property for sale, and is looking to become a re-located new church start. The church met with Henry Simmons of the Board of Homeland Ministries and Conference Minister Roger Knight on Jan. 29 to plan the next steps.

Atlanta UCC

Atlanta United Church of Christ dedicated its building on March 5, and Dr. Marvin Morgan was installed as pastor. Dr. Ben Chavis of the Commission for Racial Justice was preacher.

Atlanta, First

First Congregational Church is engaged in the second year of a dynamic financial drive for over \$1 million to renovate the historic facility. They are using the services of the Local Church Finance Advisory Services of the Board for Homeland Ministries.

Birmingham, Pilgrim

Rev. Richard Sales was installed as pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church on Feb. 26. Roger Knight was preacher.

Atlanta, Rush Memorial

Larry Calbert was called as pastor of Rush Memorial Congregational Church. Arthur Langford has assumed seminary studies at ITC after resigning last year.

Atlanta, Central

Rev. Stephen L. Sterner, former Secretary for Church Development of the Board for Homeland Ministries, will be installed as pastor of Central Congregational Church on April 9, 3 p.m. Henry Simmons will be the preacher for the installation.

Montgomery, First

Paul Johnson will be installed as pastor of First Congregational Church April 9.

Deer Lodge

Paul Johnson will be installed as pastor of Morgan County Parish, Tenn., a joint UCC, United Presbyterian church.

DR. NORMAN JACKSON TO LEADANNUAL PASTORS AND SPOUSES RETREAT

The annual Clergy and Spouses Retreat will be held May 8-10 at Rock Ridge Camp near Franklin, Georgia.

Dr. Norman Jackson, Executive Director of the Council for American Indian Ministries and a professor at United Theological Seminary, will lead the retreat.

Dr. Jackson has served as pastor of a rural and a new church. He has also served on the faculty of Eden Seminary, as Kansas-Oklahoma Conference Minister, and as assistant to the President of the United Church of Christ.

"His insights and sharing about personal faith, ministry and local church will be beneficial to all of us," said Conference Minister Roger Knight.

Registration for the retreat will begin at 11 a.m. Monday, May 8. The retreat will conclude at noon Wednesday. Registration materials will be mailed to pastors the last week in March.

"Churches are urged to support their pastor and spouse for this very important gathering of fellow colleagues in ministry," Rev. Knight said. "Plan to come!"

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### OAK GROVE GIVES \$2,000 FOR LICENSED MINISTRIES CONTINUING EDUCATION

Oak Grove Congregational Christian Church of Pine Mountain, Georgia, has given \$2,000 to the East Alabama Association to be used for Continuing Education of Licensed Ministries.

The funds were part of the proceeds of the annual Oak Grove Country Fair, which the church sponsors. The fair will held this year on Aug. 19-21.

The church also gave money to the LaGrange Personal Aid Society and for a scholarship at LaGrange College.

Dr. Frederick Mills is pastor of the 116 member church.

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UCC highway signs are available from the Georgia-South Carolina Association for its churches at \$28.00. Contact Conference.

# REV. WARREN BLANKENHORN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT DATE TO BOARD

Rev. Warren Blankenhorn, the associate conference minister for the southern Alabama area, has announced he intends to retire on July 7, 1989.

The Conference Board of Directors accepted the resignation "with the highest honor and deepest gratitude for the faithful ministry he has performed in our midst," in a motion by James Field at the Feb. 25, meeting.

"No more appropriate words can be said than those words of Jesus about authentic ministry: 'I know my sheep and my sheep know me,'" the motion said.

"A shepherd of souls, who knows lives and the pasture where good food is found! In recognition of Warren's humble nature and devoted service, we look to appropriately honoring him ... "

Rev. Blankenhorn will be honored at the a banquet at the Conference annual meeting. Louise Cox is chair. Suggestions can be addressed to her at 563 Avenue A, LaFayette, Alabama 36862.

# REV. JOYCE MYERS-BROWN HONORED

The Rev. Joyce B. Meyers-Brown has been awarded the Antoinette Brown Award, annually presented to outstanding women in ministry.

Rev. Myers-Brown is currently on leave from her position as an associate with the Office for Church Life and Leadership, and is serving with her husband Ed Brown with the Reformed Church of France.

The award is named after Antoinette Brown who was the first regularly ordained women minister in America. She was ordained at age 28 at the Congregational Church of South Butler, N.Y., on Sept. 15, 1853. She attended seminary at Oberlin, the woman in the school's history.

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Walter Brueggeman of Central Congregational Church gave the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale University in February.  
Rev. Richard Sales of Pilgrim Congregational Church has been asked to act as liaison for the Africa Office of the UCC to relay South African "Alerts."

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